



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact: Javier Heras (619) 338-2061

Liz Quaranta (619) 338-2360

COOKING UP FOOD SAFETY FOR THE SUMMER

Provide Safe Food To Guests and a Hot Reception for Unwanted Bacteria

County of San Diego leaders together with the San Diego County, Food Safety Advisory Council continue to promote safe food practices for the summer season. Summertime barbecues and warm weather are here; disease-causing bacteria also want to join the party. Food safety experts are cooking up a hot reception for unwanted bacterial guests. Cooking ground beef to 157°F (69°C) and chicken to an internal temperature of 165°F (74°C) will minimize the chance of foodborne illness.

"With July 4th celebrations right around the corner, it is critical that backyard chefs think about food safety. No one wants food borne illness crashing their summer party," said Greg Cox, Chairman of the San Diego County Board of Supervisors. "Safely cooked food is a reasonable expectation, whether eating out or dining in. I am pleased to see the food industry working with government to educate County residents and ensure food safety."

"With the heat of summer approaching and San Diegans enjoying outdoor dining activities, we want to remind everyone to take proper food safety precautions when they have their own summer picnics and barbeques outside," says Ken Irvine, president of the California Restaurant Association San Diego County Chapter.

"Be safe like the food experts and use a thermometer when cooking," said Gilbert Canizales with the 500-member California Grocers Association.

"Many people know that poultry should be thoroughly cooked to reduce the potential for Salmonella," said Gary Erbeck, Director, Department of Environmental Health. "Cooking to 165°F (74°C) also reduces the probability of Campylobacter, another serious foodborne illness pathogen." He outlined the four key ingredients of food safety:

- **CLEAN:** Everyone should wash his or her hands thoroughly for at least 20 seconds. Wash the exterior of melons or other fruit before slicing.
- **SEPARATE:** Store raw meat, poultry and seafood so juices don't drip onto other foods. Never place cooked food on a plate that previously held raw meat or poultry.
- **COOK:** Get the thermometer ready or buy a new one. Cook meat products thoroughly and check with the thermometer. Don't guess on food safety temperatures for guests.
- **CHILL:** Don't over pack the refrigerator or the cooler. Ensure temperatures are at 41°F (5°C) or less. Refrigerate perishables, prepared foods and leftovers within two hours.

"Whenever the public exercises their right to order or eat undercooked food – they increase the risk of foodborne illness," said Stephen Zolezzi, Executive Vice President of the Food and Beverage Association. "We encourage people to reheat leftovers to 165°F."

For additional information visit www.fightbac.org or www.foodsafety.gov

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DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH
1255 IMPERIAL AVE. • SAN DIEGO, CA 92101-2422